#### IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

RUBEN RODRIGUEZ : CIVIL ACTION – LAW

1026 Josephine Drive : NO.

Temple, PA 19560 :

Plaintiff

vs. : Electronically filed

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MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP :

210 George Street :

Reading, PA 19605

AND
MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE

DEPARTMENT : JURY TRIAL OF 12 DEMANDED

210 George Street : JOKT TRIAL OF 12 DEMANDED

Reading, PA 19605

Defendants :

#### **COMPLAINT**

#### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

1. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1331 as the action arises under Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §2000e, et seq. and 42 U.S.C. §1981. Plaintiff's Title VII Notice of Right to Sue letter was issued July 24, 2020 and is attached as Exhibit A and this Complaint was filed within 90 days of receipt of that Notice. Plaintiff cross-filed this matter under the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, 43 Pa.C.S. §951, et seq., with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission and it has not been one year since that cross-filing. Plaintiff seeks the Court to deem this action filed when one year has passed. This Court has supplemental jurisdiction over the state law claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1367 because they are so related to the federal claims that they form part of the same case.

2. Venue is proper in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania because Defendants are located in this District.

#### FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- 3. Plaintiff Ruben Rodriguez is an adult male and Berks County resident living at 1026 Josephine Drive, Temple, PA 19560.
- 4. Defendant Muhlenberg Township (hereinafter "Defendant MT"), with offices located at 210 George Street, Reading, PA 19605, is a municipality located in Berks County, Pennsylvania where Plaintiff worked.
- 5. Defendant Muhlenberg Township Police Department (hereinafter "Defendant MTPD"), with offices located at 210 George Street, Reading, PA 19605, is a police department serving Muhlenberg Township at which Plaintiff worked.
  - 6. Plaintiff worked for Defendants for just under a year.
- 7. Plaintiff is Hispanic (race), Brown (color), his national origin is Puerto Rico, and his ethnicity is Puerto Rican.
  - 8. Defendant MTPD fired Plaintiff shortly (one day) before his one-year anniversary.
- 9. Per the Fraternal Order of Police Union contract with Defendant MTPD, Plaintiff would have been protected by a Fraternal Order of Police Union contract if he served one year.
  - 10. Plaintiff received no write-ups, bad reviews, or any warning whatsoever.
- 11. Defendant MTPD never let go in a similarly-situated way police officers outside Plaintiff's protected classes in anywhere close to this fashion (one day before their one-year anniversary with no warning).
  - 12. Plaintiff's termination was as a result of race discrimination and retaliation.
  - 13. Plaintiff suffered a hostile work environment.

- 14. There was serious discrimination (at least verbally) in this workplace from August 2019 onwards.
- 15. Officers, both in squad meetings and outside them as individual or group settings, made derogatory comments about Puerto Ricans and Hispanics in general.
- 16. They would say things like "It's got to be a PR" (Puerto Rican) in reference to when there was anything criminal involved, and the Puerto Ricans were "his people."
  - 17. Plaintiff was specifically called out for "knowing all the criminals."
  - 18. Plaintiff tolerated this commentary for fear of losing his job.
  - 19. As of January 2019, things got worse for Plaintiff.
- 20. Somewhere between January 1, 2019 and January 4, 2019, Sgt. Joel Marino became Plaintiff's sergeant.
  - 21. Things changed for Plaintiff after Sgt. Marino took over Plaintiff's unit.
- 22. Sgt. Marino was constantly picking on Plaintiff despite the huge load of work he assigned to Plaintiff.
- 23. The other officers in the department noticed Sgt. Marino's obvious and apparent nitpicking on Plaintiff and told Plaintiff.
- 24. In February, there was a particular discussion in the squad room (with officers and Sgt. Marino being present) in which various officers made racial comments ("it's always your people," "it's always the Puerto Ricans," "build a wall").
- 25. Sgt. Marino approached Plaintiff afterwards and asked if Plaintiff was offended by anything that was said.
- 26. Plaintiff replied that it did bother him, but asked Sgt. Marino to handle the situation as he saw fit as he (Plaintiff) didn't want to be viewed as complaining.

- 27. Subsequently, on two occasions, Plaintiff refused to cooperate with "setting up" two Hispanic officers, Officer Rile and Officer Carballo, with inaccurate charges.
- 28. As far as Officer Rile, Sgt. Marino asked Plaintiff to say in an event investigated by Plaintiff that Officer Rile asked Plaintiff to cover up for him so he wouldn't get in trouble.
  - 29. Officer Rile did not ask Plaintiff to do this.
  - 30. Plaintiff believes that Officer Rile was being targeted for termination.
- 31. Plaintiff believes that his refusal to falsely characterize what occurred contributed to his (Plaintiff's) eventual termination.
- 32. Similarly, Sgt. Marino came to Plaintiff about a claim that Officer Carballo was voluntarily acting in concert with gang members.
  - 33. Sgt. Marino used Plaintiff as a translator with the 17-year-old gang member.
- 34. The gang member said that he had asked Officer Carballo to participate in a music video using Department-issued vehicles.
- 35. Sgt. Marino wanted Plaintiff to state that the gang member claimed that Officer Carballo was "involved in gang activity."
  - 36. Plaintiff would not go along with the mischaracterization.
- 37. No one, to Plaintiff's knowledge, ever asked him about Sgt. Marino's attempt to set up Officer Carballo.
- 38. Shortly before Plaintiff was let go, Plaintiff was subpoenaed to testify on behalf of Officer Rile.
- 39. After Plaintiff was terminated, Plaintiff, pursuant to the subpoena, showed up to testify but was told he was not needed.
  - 40. On or about April 23, 2019, Plaintiff was fired, one day before his one-year anniversary.

- 41. Plaintiff was given several pretexts for letting him go that Defendant MTPD already knew or that were extremely small issues or mischaracterizations.
- 42. Similarly-situated Caucasian officers who had issues were treated much more favorably than the Hispanic officers.
- 43. The incidents the Hispanic officers were accused of were small or trivial in comparison.
- 44. Defendant MTPD acted with malice or reckless indifference to Plaintiff's federally-protected rights.
- 45. At the time of his termination, Plaintiff was earning \$25-\$26 an hour (approximately \$59,000/year) plus benefits.
- 46. At all relevant times, the Defendants did not act in good faith and the activity of terminating or failing to continue to employ Plaintiff was done in consultation with second-line supervisors or above.
- 47. Defendants' activity herein was not done pursuant to good-faith practices in antidiscrimination requiring <u>Kolstad</u> liability.
- 48. The Defendants' activities in letting Plaintiff go was done by second-line supervisors and above.
  - 49. No similarly-situated members of other protected classes were treated in this fashion.

#### **COUNT I**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP

#### **VIOLATION OF TITLE VII -- DISCRIMINATION**

- 50. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 49 above as if set forth herein.
- 51. Plaintiff is in protected classes.

- 52. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because of his race, ethnicity, national origin or color by Defendant MT and because he opposed and refused to participate in discrimination against other Hispanic employees.
- 53. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his membership in a protected class.
  - 54. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT II**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP

#### VIOLATION OF TITLE VII – HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT

- 55. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 54 above as if set forth herein.
- 56. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 57. Plaintiff suffered intentional discrimination in his work environment because of his race, ethnicity, national origin or color by Defendant MT.
  - 58. The discrimination was severe or pervasive.
  - 59. The discrimination detrimentally affected Plaintiff.
- 60. The discrimination would detrimentally affect a reasonable person of the same race, ethnicity, national origin or color as Plaintiff.

- 61. Respondeat superior liability exists.
- 62. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT III**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP

#### **VIOLATION OF TITLE VII -- RETALIATION**

- 63. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 62 above as if set forth herein.
- 64. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 65. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because he opposed and refused to participate in discrimination against other employees and he would not lie about fellow Hispanic officers' conduct and/or he was poised to testify on behalf of a fellow Hispanic officer under subpoena in the officer's termination proceeding.
  - 66. Plaintiff has a good-faith, reasonable belief that his conduct was protected activity.
- 67. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his activity herein.
  - 68. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief

such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's <u>Eshelman</u> doctrine.

#### **COUNT IV**

# PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP VIOLATION OF SECTION 1981 -- DISCRIMINATION

- 69. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 68 above as if set forth herein.
- 70. Plaintiff is in a protected class, Hispanic.
- 71. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because of his race by Defendant MT.
- 72. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his membership in the protected class.
  - 73. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### COUNT V

# PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP <u>VIOLATION OF SECTION 1981 – HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT</u>

74. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 73 above as if set forth herein.

- 75. Plaintiff is in a protected class, Hispanic.
- 76. Plaintiff suffered intentional discrimination in his environment because of his race by Defendant MT.
  - 77. The discrimination was severe or pervasive.
  - 78. The discrimination detrimentally affected Plaintiff.
- 79. The discrimination would detrimentally affect a reasonable person of the same race as Plaintiff.
  - 80. Respondeat superior liability exists.
  - 81. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's <u>Eshelman</u> doctrine.

#### **COUNT VI**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP

#### <u>VIOLATION OF SECTION 1981 -- RETALIATION FOR</u> <u>OPPOSITIONAL AND/OR PARTICIPATORY CONDUCT</u>

- 82. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 81 above as if set forth herein.
- 83. Plaintiff is in a protected class, race.
- 84. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because he opposed and refused to participate in discrimination against other employees and he would not lie about fellow Hispanic

officers' conduct and/or he was poised to testify on behalf of a fellow Hispanic officer under subpoena in the officer's termination proceeding.

- 85. Plaintiff has a good-faith, reasonable belief that his conduct was protected activity.
- 86. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his activity herein.
  - 87. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT VII**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP

#### **VIOLATION OF FIRST AMENDMENT**

- 88. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 87 above as if set forth herein.
- 89. Plaintiff is a United States citizen.
- 90. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because he refused to lie about the conduct of fellow Hispanic officers and/or was poised to testify on behalf of a fellow Hispanic police officer in his termination proceeding.
  - 91. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief

such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's <u>Eshelman</u> doctrine.

#### **COUNT VIII**

### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP

#### DISCRIMINATION

#### **VIOLATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS ACT**

- 92. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 91 above as if set forth herein.
- 93. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 94. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because of his race, ethnicity, national origin or color by Defendant MT.
- 95. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his membership in a protected class.
  - 96. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) other costs of the action; (7) interest; and (8) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT IX**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP

#### HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT

#### **VIOLATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS ACT**

- 97. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 96 above as if set forth herein.
- 98. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 99. Plaintiff suffered intentional discrimination in his environment because of his race, ethnicity, national origin or color by Defendant MT.
  - 100. The discrimination was severe or pervasive.
  - 101. The discrimination detrimentally affected Plaintiff.
- 102. The discrimination would detrimentally affect a reasonable person of the same race, ethnicity, national origin or color as Plaintiff.
  - 103. Respondeat superior liability exists.
  - 104. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) other costs of the action; (7) interest; and (8) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT X**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP

#### RETALIATION

#### VIOLATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS ACT

- 105. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 104 above as if set forth herein.
- 106. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 107. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because he opposed and refused to participate in discrimination against other employees and he would not lie about fellow Hispanic officers' conduct and/or he was poised to testify on behalf of a fellow Hispanic officer under subpoena in the officer's termination proceeding.
  - 108. Plaintiff has a good-faith, reasonable belief that his conduct was protected activity.
- 109. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his activity herein.
  - 110. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) other costs of the action; (7) interest; and (8) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XII**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### **VIOLATION OF TITLE VII -- DISCRIMINATION**

- 111. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 110 above as if set forth herein.
- 112. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 113. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because of his race, ethnicity, national origin or color by Defendant MTPD and because he opposed and refused to participate in discrimination against other Hispanic employees.
- 114. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his membership in a protected class.
  - 115. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XIII**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### <u>VIOLATION OF TITLE VII – HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT</u>

- 116. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 115 above as if set forth herein.
- 117. Plaintiff is in protected classes.

- 118. Plaintiff suffered intentional discrimination in his environment because of his race, ethnicity, national origin or color by Defendant MTPD.
  - 119. The discrimination was severe or pervasive.
  - 120. The discrimination detrimentally affected Plaintiff.
- 121. The discrimination would detrimentally affect a reasonable person of the same race, ethnicity, national origin or color as Plaintiff.
  - 122. Respondeat superior liability exists.
  - 123. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XIV**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### **VIOLATION OF TITLE VII -- RETALIATION**

- 124. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 123 above as if set forth herein.
- 125. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 126. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because he opposed and refused to participate in discrimination against other employees and he would not lie about fellow Hispanic officers' conduct and/or he was poised to testify on behalf of a fellow Hispanic officer under subpoena in the officer's termination proceeding.

- 127. Plaintiff has a good-faith, reasonable belief that his conduct was protected activity.
- 128. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his activity herein.
  - 129. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XV**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### **VIOLATION OF SECTION 1981 -- DISCRIMINATION**

- 130. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 129 above as if set forth herein.
- 131. Plaintiff is in a protected class, race.
- 132. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because of his race by Defendant MTPD.
- 133. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his membership in a protected class.
  - 134. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5)

damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XVI**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### **VIOLATION OF SECTION – HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

- 135. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 134 above as if set forth herein.
- 136. Plaintiff is in a protected class, race.
- 137. Plaintiff suffered intentional discrimination in his environment because of his race by Defendant MTPD.
  - 138. The discrimination was severe or pervasive.
  - 139. The discrimination detrimentally affected Plaintiff.
- 140. The discrimination would detrimentally affect a reasonable person of the same race as Plaintiff.
  - 141. Respondeat superior liability exists.
  - 142. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XVII**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### <u>VIOLATION OF SECTION 1981 -- RETALIATION FOR</u> <u>OPPOSITIONAL AND/OR PARTICIPATORY CONDUCT</u>

- 143. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 142 above as if set forth herein.
- 144. Plaintiff is in a protected class, race.
- 145. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because he opposed and refused to participate in discrimination against other employees and he would not lie about fellow Hispanic officers' conduct and/or he was poised to testify on behalf of a fellow Hispanic officer under subpoena in the officer's termination proceeding.
  - 146. Plaintiff has a good-faith, reasonable belief that his conduct was protected activity.
- 147. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his activity herein.
  - 148. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's <u>Eshelman</u> doctrine.

#### **COUNT XVIII**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MULHENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### **VIOLATION OF FIRST AMENDMENT**

- 149. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 148 above as if set forth herein.
- 150. Plaintiff is a United States citizen.
- 151. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because he refused to lie about the conduct of fellow Hispanic officers and/or was poised to testify on behalf of a fellow Hispanic police officer in his termination proceeding.
  - 152. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) punitive damages; (7) other costs of the action; (8) interest; and (9) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XIX**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MULHENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### DISCRIMINATION

#### VIOLATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS ACT

- 153. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 152 above as if set forth herein.
- 154. Plaintiff is in protected classes.

- 155. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because of his race, ethnicity, national origin or color by Defendant MTPD.
- 156. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his membership in a protected class.
  - 157. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) other costs of the action; (7) interest; and (8) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XX**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT

#### **VIOLATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS ACT**

- 158. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 157 above as if set forth herein.
- 159. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 160. Plaintiff suffered intentional discrimination in his environment because of his race, ethnicity, national origin or color by Defendant MTPD.
  - 161. The discrimination was severe or pervasive.
  - 162. The discrimination detrimentally affected Plaintiff.
- 163. The discrimination would detrimentally affect a reasonable person of the same race, ethnicity, national origin or color as Plaintiff.

- 164. Respondeat superior liability exists.
- 165. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) other costs of the action; (7) interest; and (8) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

#### **COUNT XXI**

#### PLAINTIFF v. DEFENDANT MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### RETALIATION

#### <u>VIOLATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS ACT</u>

- 166. Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1 through 165 above as if set forth herein.
- 167. Plaintiff is in protected classes.
- 168. Plaintiff suffered adverse employment action(s) because he would not lie about fellow Hispanic officers' conduct and/or he was poised to testify on behalf of a fellow Hispanic officer under subpoena in the officer's termination proceeding.
  - 169. Plaintiff has a good-faith, reasonable belief that his conduct was protected activity.
- 170. There is a causal connection between the adverse employment action sustained by Plaintiff and his activity herein.
  - 171. Plaintiff has suffered damages.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands the following relief: (1) wages, employment benefits or other compensation denied or lost by such violation, including front wages; (2) equitable relief

such as rehiring; (3) a reasonable attorney's fee; (4) the employee's expert witness fee, if any; (5) damages for pain, suffering, humiliation, and emotional distress; (6) other costs of the action; (7) interest; and (8) an additional amount for the tax consequences for an award in Plaintiff's favor under the Third Circuit's Eshelman doctrine.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 10/21/2020

BY: s/Edward C. Sweeney

Edward C. Sweeney, Esquire Attorney for Plaintiff I.D. No. 64565 211 Welsh Pool Road, Suite 236 Exton, PA 19341 (610) 594-1600 Validation of signature code: ECS1942

# EXHIBIT A

EEOC Form 161-B (11/16)		(11/16)	U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION					
			Notice of Right	TO SUE (ISSUED	ON	I REQUEST)		
To:	1026 J	Rodriguez osephine Drive e, PA 19560		Fron	§	Philadelphia District Office 801 Market Street Suite 1000 Philadelphia, PA 19107	PPPPPPIN PIN III II	
		On behalf of person(s) CONFIDENTIAL (29 C	aggrieved whose identity is FR §1601.7(a))	·				
EE(	OC Charge	No.	EEOC Rep	resentative		Telephone No.		
530	)-20 <b>20</b> -0	2343	Legal Ur Legal Te			(267) 589-97	700	
	<del>deren er den</del> kriv		,	(See al.	so th	he additional information enclosed with	this form.)	
Title Act beer of y	VII of th (GINA): 1 r issued a our recei	This is your Notice of I at your request, Your	Right to Sue, issued unde lawsuit under Title VII, th	r Title VII, the ADA or GI e ADA or GINA must be	NA k filec	or the Genetic Information Nondiscr based on the above-numbered charge id in a federal or state court <u>WITHIN</u> the time limit for filing suit based on a cl	e. It has 90 DAYS	
		More than 180 days	have passed since the fill	ng of this charge.				
	X	Less than 180 days have passed since the filing of this charge, but I have determined that it is unlikely that the EEOC will be able to complete its administrative processing within 180 days from the filing of this charge.						
	X	The EEOC is terminating its processing of this charge.						
		The EEOC will contin	nue to process this charge	). Э.				
90 d						time from 60 days after the charge wagard, the paragraph marked below a		
The EEOC is closing your case. Therefore, your lawsuit under the ADEA must be filed in federal or sta 90 DAYS of your receipt of this Notice. Otherwise, your right to sue based on the above-numbered characteristics.						must be filed in federal or state cou sed on the above-numbered charge wi	rt <u>WITHIN</u> Il be lost.	
The EEOC is continuing its handling of your ADEA case. However, if 60 days have passed since the filing of the you may file suit in federal or state court under the ADEA at this time.							charge,	
in fe	deral or s	tate court within 2 year	have the right to sue und rs (3 years for willful violat e than 2 years (3 years)	ions) of the alleged EPA	unde	harge is not required.) EPA suits must erpayment. This means that backpay ot be collectible.	be brought due for	
lf yo	u file sult,	based on this charge,	please send a copy of yo	ur court complaint to this	office	ce.		
			<b></b>	On behalf of the C	omn	mission		
		·	Gw	in RWIlliams	ı <u>.</u>	July 24, 202	20	
End	dosures(a	s)		Jamle R. Williamso District Director		(Date Ma	illed)	
cc:		lichael Setley, Esq. olictor				C. Sweeney, Esq. CH & SWEENEY, LLC		

Michael Setley, Esq. Solictor MUHLENGERG TOWNSHIP 4 Park Plaza Wyomissing, PA 19610 Edward C. Sweeney, Esq. WUSINICH & SWEENEY, LLC 211 Weish Pool Road Suite 236 Exton, PA 19341

## Case 5:20-cv-05242-JLS Document 1 Filed 10/21/20 Page 25 of 27 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

#### DESIGNATION FORM

(to be used by counsel or pro se plaintiff to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to the appropriate calendar)

Address of Plaintiff: 1026 Josephine Drive, Temple, PA 19560							
Address of Defendant: 210 George Street, Reading, PA 19605							
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction: 210 George Street, Reading, PA 19605							
RELATED CASE, IF ANY:							
Case Number: Date Terminated:							
Civil cases are deemed related when Yes is answered to any of the following questions:							
1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one year Yes No   previously terminated action in this court?							
2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior suit  yes  No  pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court?							
3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlier Yes No Vermumbered case pending or within one year previously terminated action of this court?							
4. Is this case a second or successive habeas corpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil rights  Yes  No  Verification of the same individual?							
I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case is / is not related to any case now-pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court except as noted above.							
DATE: 074 707 Miles 64565  Attorney-at-Law/Pro Se Plaintiff Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)							
CIVIL: (Place a √in one category only)							
A. Federal Question Cases:  B. Diversity Jurisdiction Cases:							
1. Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, and All Other Contracts  2. FELA  3. Jones Act-Personal Injury  4. Antitrust  5. Patent  6. Labor-Management Relations  7. Civil Rights  8. Habeas Corpus  9. Securities Act(s) Cases  10. Social Security Review Cases  7. Insurance Contract and Other Contracts  1. Insurance Contract and Other Contracts  2. Airplane Personal Injury  3. Assault, Defamation  4. Marine Personal Injury  5. Motor Vehicle Personal Injury  6. Other Personal Injury  7. Products Liability  8. Products Liability — Asbestos  9. All other Diversity Cases  (Please specify):  11. All other Federal Question Cases  (Please specify):  12. Alignme Personal Injury  4. Marine Personal Injury  5. Motor Vehicle Personal Injury  6. Other Personal Injury  6. Other Personal Injury  9. All other Products Liability  12. All other Diversity Cases  (Please specify):  13. Assault, Defamation  14. Marine Personal Injury  15. Motor Vehicle Personal Injury  16. Other Personal Injury  17. Products Liability  18. Products Liability  19. All other Diversity Cases  10. Social Securities Act(s) Cases  10. Vehicle Personal Injury  10. All other Personal Injury  10. All other Personal Injury  11. All other Personal Injury  12. All other Personal Injury  13. Assault, Defamation  14. Marine Personal Injury  15. Motor Vehicle Personal Injury  16. Other Personal Injury  17. Products Liability  18. Products Liability  19. All other Personal Inju							
ARBITRATION CERTIFICATION							
(The effect of this certification is to remove the case from eligibility for arbitration.)  I,Edward C. Sweeney, counsel of record or pro se plaintiff, do hereby certify:							
Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, § 3(c) (2), that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the damages recoverable in this civil action case exceed the sum of \$150,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs:							
Relief other than monetary damages is sought.							
DATE: 10/20/2020 Janel Mills 64565							
Attorney-at-Law/Pro Se Plaintiff Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)  NOTE: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if there has been compliance with F.R.C.P. 38.							

#### 

JS 44 (Rev. 10/20)

#### **CIVIL COVER SHEET**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

Perpose of initiating the civil a	Seket Sheet. (BEE INSTRUC	HOND ON MEXITAGE OF					
I. (a) PLAINTIFFS			DEFENDANTS Muhlenberg	S Township			
Ruben Rodriguez		60	210 George Street, Reading, PA 19605 and				
(b) County of Residence of	Orive, Temple, PA 195	erks		Twp. Police Depa Street Reading of First Listed Defendant			
	XCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CA		50.00	(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES O ONDEMNATION CASES, USE TI	NLY)		
			THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.				
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Edward C. Swee Wusinich & Swe	Address, and Telephone Numbe eney, Esq. eeney, LLC	r)	Attorneys (If Known)	)			
211 Welsh Pool 610-594-1600	eney, Esq. eney, LLC L Rd., Suite 23	36, Exton, PA	19341				
II. BASIS OF JURISD	ICTION (Place an "X" in	One Box Only)			Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff		
U.S. Government Plaintiff	▼ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)		(For Diversity Cases Only)  I Citizen of This State	PTF DEF  1			
2 U.S. Government Defendant	4 Diversity (Indicate Citizensh.	ip of Parties in Item III)	Citizen of Another State	2 Incorporated and F	Principal Place 5 5		
			Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	3 Foreign Nation	6 66		
IV. NATURE OF SUIT	(Place an "X" in One Box Or	aly)		Click here for: Nature of S	uit Code Descriptions.		
CONTRACT		RTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES		
110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument	PERSONAL INJURY  310 Airplane  315 Airplane Product Liability	PERSONAL INJURY  365 Personal Injury - Product Liability  367 Health Care/	625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881	422 Appeal 28 USC 158 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157	375 False Claims Act 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a)) 400 State Reapportionment		
150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	320 Assault, Libel & Slander	Pharmaceutical Personal Injury		PROPERTY RIGHTS  820 Copyrights	410 Antitrust 430 Banks and Banking		
151 Medicare Act	330 Federal Employers'	Product Liability		830 Patent	450 Commerce		
152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans	Liability 368 Asbestos Personal 340 Marine Injury Product			835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application	460 Deportation 470 Racketeer Influenced and		
(Excludes Veterans)	345 Marine Product	Liability		840 Trademark	Corrupt Organizations		
153 Recovery of Overpayment	Liability PERSONAL PROPER			880 Defend Trade Secrets	480 Consumer Credit		
of Veteran's Benefits  160 Stockholders' Suits	350 Motor Vehicle 355 Motor Vehicle	370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending	710 Fair Labor Standards	Act of 2016	(15 USC 1681 or 1692) 485 Telephone Consumer		
190 Other Contract	Product Liability	380 Other Personal	720 Labor/Management	SOCIAL SECURITY	Protection Act		
195 Contract Product Liability	360 Other Personal Property Damage		Relations	861 HIA (1395ff)	490 Cable/Sat TV		
196 Franchise	Injury  362 Personal Injury -	385 Property Damage	740 Railway Labor Act	862 Black Lung (923)	850 Securities/Commodities/		
	Medical Malpractice	Product Liability	751 Family and Medical Leave Act	863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) 864 SSID Title XVI	Exchange 890 Other Statutory Actions		
REAL PROPERTY	CIVIL RIGHTS	PRISONER PETITIONS	790 Other Labor Litigation	865 RSI (405(g))	891 Agricultural Acts		
210 Land Condemnation	440 Other Civil Rights	Habeas Corpus:	791 Employee Retirement		893 Environmental Matters		
220 Foreclosure	441 Voting	463 Alien Detainee	Income Security Act	FEDERAL TAX SUITS	895 Freedom of Information		
230 Rent Lease & Ejectment 240 Torts to Land	442 Employment 443 Housing/	510 Motions to Vacate Sentence		870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant)	Act 896 Arbitration		
245 Tort Product Liability	Accommodations	530 General		871 IRS—Third Party	899 Administrative Procedure		
290 All Other Real Property	445 Amer. w/Disabilities -	535 Death Penalty	IMMIGRATION	26 USC 7609	Act/Review or Appeal of		
	Employment 446 Amer. w/Disabilities -	Other: 540 Mandamus & Other	462 Naturalization Applicatio	n	Agency Decision		
	Other	550 Civil Rights	465 Other Immigration Actions		950 Constitutionality of State Statutes		
	448 Education	555 Prison Condition					
		560 Civil Detainee -					
		Conditions of Confinement					
V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" is	n One Box Only)						
A		Remanded from 4	Reopened Anothe	Perred from 6 Multidistricer District Litigation Transfer	- Litigation -		
	Cite the U.S. Civil Sta	tute under which you are t	speci <u>j)</u> filing <b>(Do not cite jurisdictional st</b>	//	Direct File		
VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	Title VII.	42 U.S.C. §20	00e, et seq. & 4	2 U.S.C. §1981			
	Race discri	mination, ret	aliation, hostil	e work environme	nt		
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:	CHECK IF THIS UNDER RULE 2:	IS A CLASS ACTION 3, F.R.Cv.P.	DEMAND \$	CHECK YES only JURY DEMAND:	if demanded in complaint:  XYes No		
VIII. RELATED CASI IF ANY	E(S) (See instructions):	JUDGE		DOCKET NUMBER			
DATE 10/20/2	2020	SIGNATURE OF ATTO	ENEY OF RECORD				
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		caving	7000				
RECEIPT # AM	MOUNT	APPLYING IFP	JUDGE	MAG. JUI	OGE		

## IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

#### CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

Telephone	FAX Nun	ıber	E-Mail Address				
610-594-1600	610-594-6518		esweeney@wspalaw.com				
Date	Attorney-a	it-law	Attorney for				
10/21/2020	Edward C. Sw	eeney, Esquir	e Plaintiff				
(f) Standard Management	ne of the other tracks.	(x)					
(e) Special Management – commonly referred to a the court. (See reverse management cases.)	r intense management by	( )					
(d) Asbestos – Cases invol exposure to asbestos.	property damage from	( )					
(c) Arbitration - Cases req	(c) Arbitration - Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2						
(b) Social Security – Cases and Human Services de		( )					
(a) Habeas Corpus – Cases	s brought under 28	3 U.S.C. § 2241	through § 2255.	( )			
SELECT ONE OF THE I	FOLLOWING C.	ASE MANAGE	MENT TRACKS:				
In accordance with the Cipplaintiff shall complete a Cipplaint and ser side of this form.) In the designation, that defendant	vil Justice Expens case Management we a copy on all de event that a defe shall, with its firs arties, a Case Man	Track Designation of the Track Designation of the Track of the Track of the Track of Track of Track	NO. duction Plan of this court, couns on Form in all civil cases at the tire 1:03 of the plan set forth on the reagree with the plaintiff regarding abmit to the clerk of court and ser Designation Form specifying the	me of verse said ve on			
V. UHLENBERG TOWNSHIP 10 George Street, Reading, I UHLENBERG TWP. POLICE DEPAR	PA 19605 AND	: :					
UBEN RODRIGUEZ 026 Josephine Drive, Temple	, PA 19560	<b>:</b>	CIVIL ACTION				

(Civ. 660) 10/02